

# Inside IEMA

Monthly Newsletter

Illinois Emergency Management Agency

July 2017

## From IEMA Director James K. Joseph

Shock. Disbelief. Loss. And tears...many tears. These are just some of the emotions visible on the faces of thousands of people recently after surging floodwaters wrecked havoc on their lives and homes in northern Illinois.

While the impact in several communities is still being assessed, we can be thankful there were no lives lost during this event. Flooding is one of the leading causes of weather-related fatalities, most of which result from people in vehicles attempting to drive across flooded roads. "Turn Around, Don't Drown" is much more than a mere catchphrase – it's an action that could save your life and those of the ones you love.

Tragically, during the New Year's floods in 2016, more than a dozen people lost their lives by driving through floodwaters. We pray that we never experience such loss of life from flooding again.

Another positive is the outpouring of support from people and voluntary organizations who rushed to offer assistance, from filling and placing sandbags, to providing meals and respite for volunteers and residents, to donations to help with immediate and long-term needs. Even in the darkest hours, the kindness of others giving of their time, energy and donations provides the glimmer of hope many people affected by the floods needed to keep moving forward.

Recovery from this flooding will take weeks, months, even a year or longer, depending on the extent of damage. Long after our emergency operations centers have shut down, response equipment has been returned and streets have reopened, those affected by flooding still will be putting their lives back together.

We can never forget that everything we do is about people. Keeping them safe. Helping them when their world collapses around them. While we can't bring back the lost mementos, replace damaged personal items or take away their pain, we can, and must, do everything within our powers to help them move on from this terrible event.

As always, thank you for your service to the residents of Illinois.



**Director Joseph listens as Susie Kuruvilla, executive director of the Gurnee Park District, discusses flood impacts to the district.**

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# Flooding Hits Several Northern Illinois Counties

Torrential downpours of up to eight inches in some areas of northern Illinois caused widespread flooding throughout the region in July and led to 12 counties being proclaimed state disaster areas.

Northeastern Illinois was impacted first in mid-July after heavy rains caused flash and river flooding in many communities along the Des Plaines and Fox rivers. Governor Bruce Rauner issued a state disaster proclamation for Lake, McHenry, Kane and Cook counties to ensure continued state support to communities as they fought back floodwaters and began the recovery process. Additional heavy rains prolonged flood levels along both rivers and delayed recovery efforts for many communities.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield was activated July 14, and operations were continuing at press time. Representatives from several state agencies and other partners staffed the SEOC to coordinate requests for state personnel and assets to help flood-impacted communities.



**The state provided more than 735,000 sandbags to help communities fight back floodwaters.**



**IEMA deployed a State Unified Area Command vehicle to facilitate coordination of state assistance to communities affected by the floods.**

In addition, a State Unified Area Command (SUAC) vehicle was deployed to Geneva in Kane County to support flood-fighting efforts. Agencies represented in the SUAC included IEMA, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Emergency Services Management Association, the American Red Cross and FEMA.

More than 1,000 families visited a Multi Agency Resource Center (MARC) that was open for three days in Round Lake Beach to connect residents affected by flooding with assistance provided by community and faith-based organizations as well as state and local governments.

Severe storms and heavy rains returned to northern Illinois during the week of July 17, when multiple waves of thunderstorms with heavy rainfall in the northwestern corner of the state triggered flash flooding and resulted in major

flooding along portions of the Rock and Pecatonica rivers. As a result, Gov. Rauner issued a state disaster proclamation for Carroll, Henry, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Rock Island, Stephenson and Whiteside counties.

To support flood-related efforts in both areas of northern Illinois, the SEOC coordinated the deployment of several resources, including more than 735,000 sandbags, pumps, trucks and heavy equipment for debris removal, Starcom21 radios, support for emergency operations centers, and damage assessment teams. More than 500,000 sandbags were pre-positioned in the region to ensure quick response to requests.

A MARC was also established for two days in Johnsburg in McHenry County to assist flood-impacted residents.

IEMA requested that county emergency management agencies provide initial damage assessment data for damages to homes as well as expenses incurred by governmental bodies for flood response and recovery. Once that information is received, the agency will review it and determine whether a joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) with FEMA is warranted. Documentation from the PDA process will help the state determine if a request for federal assistance should be submitted.







## Training Summit Registration Deadline is Aug. 18

Just a few weeks remain until the Aug. 18 registration deadline for the 2017 IEMA Training Summit to be held Sept. 5-7 in Springfield! Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to expand your knowledge, hear from public safety leaders, and network with approximately 1,000 colleagues from throughout Illinois and across the U.S.

Registration has been brisk, so register soon in order to get into the breakout sessions that most interest you.

This year's summit features dynamic, thought-provoking keynote speakers, including the following:

### Lessons Learned from Planned Community Events

Communities of all sizes host large-scale events, and planning for the safety of thousands – even millions – of participants and others in the community is vitally important. During this panel discussion, we'll hear about the city of Chicago's planning for record crowds that descended on the city to celebrate the Cubs' World Series Championship from Office of Emergency Management and Communications Executive Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau; implementation of the city of Naperville's plan for the annual Ribfest following a tragic incident, presented by Sgt. Steve Schindlbeck of the Naperville Police Department; and the city of Effingham's preparations for more than 16,000 people who flocked to a Luke Bryan concert, presented by Effingham Emergency Management Coordinator Kim Tegeler.

### National Security Significant Events

Sima Merick, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and Rick Flinn, executive director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, will share their experiences hosting National Security Significant Events, including the 2016 Republican and Democratic national conventions and a papal visit.

The 2017 IEMA Training Summit features 28 different breakout topics in four periods. Sessions cover myriad topics of interest to professionals in emergency management, law enforcement, fire services, public



**Sima Merick**



**Richard Flinn**

health, voluntary organizations, other public safety-related fields and the private sector.

### Post-Summit Session: Procurement Requirements for Services and Supplies under FEMA Awards: Thursday, July 7, 1-5 p.m.

From 2008-2014, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General questioned \$352.3 million in Public Assistance grant costs awarded to local governments and non-profit organizations because they did not comply with federal procurement standards when awarding contracts. This training will cover mandatory procurement standards, methods of procurement, required contract provisions and much more, and will enable applicants to reduce common non-compliance issues that result in the de-obligation of federal disaster assistance funds. This session is a must for any governmental or non-profit organization that could receive federal funds following a disaster.

### Sponsorship and Vendor Opportunities Still Available

This year's summit schedule provides maximum exposure for sponsors and exhibitors. The Vendor Networking Reception on Sept. 5 will immediately follow a general session in the Main Hall, so attendees exiting the session will walk directly through the exhibit booth area, where they can enjoy hors d'oeuvres and browse the exhibits.

Check out the agenda, sponsorship/exhibitor opportunities and register today at <https://iemasummit2017.pathable.com/>.

## 2017 IEMA Training Summit Platinum Sponsor



**Breakout Session Wednesday, Sept. 6, 3-4 p.m.**

### **Verizon Wireless: *Emergency Response Capabilities and Preparedness***

The Verizon Wireless Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) program is designed to minimize the impact of a disruption to their customers, employees, infrastructure and business operations. They accomplish this by focusing on identifying critical functions, infrastructure and risk, implementing strategies to minimize the risk of a disruption, and developing BC/DR plans/Crisis Management Teams to recover operations in the event of a disruption.

With the ever-changing level of potential threats to these services and customers, Verizon continues to refine response and recovery capabilities. By increasing the variety of emergency services and equipment that can be deployed to the field, Verizon Wireless solidifies its commitment as a viable strategic partner with first response groups before, during and after an event and continues to be a leader in the innovation of emergency communications response.

## FEMA Seeks Comments on Regulatory Reform

In accordance with Executive Order 13777, "Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda," the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) formed a Regulatory Reform Task Force. The Task Force, led by DHS Deputy Secretary Elaine C. Duke, will review existing regulations, policies and information collections across the Department.

To inform this review, FEMA is seeking public input on regulations, policies and information collections that may be appropriate for repeal, replacement or modification. FEMA requests commenters be as specific as possible in their remarks. Preferred details would include how, for example, a particular regulation, policy or information collection imposes costs that exceed benefits or is otherwise unnecessary or ineffective.

Commenters should also include any supporting data or other relevant information such as cost information. When referencing an existing regulation, please provide specific citations from the Federal Register or Code of Federal Regulations, and include comprehensive suggestions regarding repeal, replacement or modification. Although FEMA will not respond to individual comments, FEMA values public feedback and will give careful consideration to all input that it receives.

Public comments may be made until August 14, 2017, at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket ID [FEMA-2017-0023](https://www.fema.gov/docket/FEMA-2017-0023).

## Vinson Lectures on Sealed Source and Device Safety

Gibb Vinson recently provided key lectures on prototype testing and quality assurance at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Sealed Source and Device Evaluation Workshop (G-116) in Raleigh, North Carolina. Twenty-six participants from 10 Agreement States and the NRC attended the workshop. Vinson, section head of the Radioactive Materials Section with IEMA's Bureau of Radiation Safety, has contributed as a lecturer for the course since 1995.

In a letter thanking Vinson for participating in the workshop, an NRC official noted Vinson provided "great examples and stories based on personal experience that greatly enhanced the value of the lectures, giving



**Gibb Vinson**

the participants a higher degree of understanding on the topics discussed."

Personnel in the Radioactive Materials Section routinely perform engineering and radiation safety evaluations of radioactive sealed sources and devices distributed by local manufacturers to ensure they safely contain radioactivity under normal and accident conditions of use.

Both the NRC and Agreement States issue registration certificates for distributors and manufacturers within their jurisdiction. This course ensures each jurisdiction is using the latest review techniques and issues evaluations that are compatible with the regulations and national standards.

## IEMA Receives \$1.2 Million Federal Terrorism Grant

A federal grant totaling \$1,214,024 will enable IEMA to coordinate planning, training and exercises that will enhance state and local government capability to prepare for, prevent and respond to complex coordinated terrorist attacks (CCTA).

IEMA applied in February for the competitive Program to Prepare Communities for Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attacks Grant Program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The agency's proposal outlined a four-year plan to analyze existing regional and statewide CCTA core capabilities for such attacks, develop plans to address capability gaps, provide training to community partners, conduct exercises and share lessons learned.

IEMA Director James Joseph said a complex coordinated terrorist attack, such as the November 2015 attacks in Paris, would severely stress emergency response capabilities and have long-lasting consequences for the affected community and the state.

The multi-year project will involve several state agencies, mutual aid partners with law enforcement, fire services and emergency management, Peoria city and county agencies, voluntary organizations and federal agencies.

Other CCTA grant recipients include the city of Aurora, which received \$1.3 million, and Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications, which received \$699,502.

## Radiation Training Focuses on Medical Services

Thirty-four staff members from Illinois Valley Community Hospital (IVCH) in Peru, local ambulance services, IEMA, Exelon and LaSalle County recently participated in medical services training and a related exercise in support of the LaSalle Nuclear Power Station.

In the event of a radiological release from the nuclear plant, IVCH could receive and treat patients contaminated with radioactive material.

Training activities focused on procedures for surveying and monitoring patients using radioactive sources and instrumentation, as well as proper methods for donning and doffing protective clothing. These skills were then tested during an exercise. Ambulance staff participated in an evening training session.

While IVCH is not part of response activities evaluated by FEMA, hospital personnel participate in training, exercises and evaluations using the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program evaluation and guidance criteria to ensure they are prepared to handle the unique challenges of injured patients who are also contaminated.

Several hospital staff members who are not involved with the emergency room participated in the training and exercise for the first time. These nurses, whose regular work duties involve home visits with patients, posed insightful questions that drove scenarios and the in-depth procedural discussion.



**While nuclear medicine personnel survey a mock patient for contamination, nurses assess the patient's condition and report to a buffer zone nurse.**



# Douglas County Opens New Emergency Operations Center

On June 21, the Douglas County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) dedicated its new Emergency Operations Center. The Douglas County Annex project began in 2011 with the vision of providing emergency response organizations a central point for coordination and management of emergencies and disasters within the county.

Douglas County EMA Director Joe Victor spearheaded planning and oversight of the six-year project.

During the dedication event, Douglas County Board Chairman, Don Munson noted that “today we have enhanced our capability to serve the citizens of Douglas County in the most effective way possible, one that our citizens expect and deserve.”



**Champaign County EMA Director John Dwyer, IEMA Regional Coordinator Steve Simms and Bill Keller, retired director of Champaign County EMA, attended the Douglas County EOC dedication.**

## KI Pills Available to Residents Near Nuclear Plants

Residents living within a 10-mile radius of the six operating nuclear power plants in Illinois can obtain free Potassium Iodide (KI) pills under a program recently launched by IEMA. More than 60,000 homes within the Emergency Planning Zones (EPZs) of each plant are eligible for the pills.

IEMA obtained 215,000 pills at no cost from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

KI is a non-prescription drug used to protect the thyroid from radioactive iodine, which could be released during a nuclear power plant accident. The state of Illinois previously distributed KI pills to residents near nuclear power plants in 2002 and 2012.

It's important to note that KI protects only the thyroid gland from uptake of radioactive iodine, which could be released during a nuclear power plant incident. Evacuation and sheltering in place are still the most effective ways to protect the whole body from radiation exposure, which remains the state's top priority.



To obtain the free pills, people living within the 10-mile EPZ of a nuclear power plant can download a voucher and a list of participating pharmacies at <https://public.iema.state.il.us/KiProcessing/Ki> or contact IEMA at 217-782-1326. The vouchers can be redeemed for a two-day supply of KI for every member of the household at 30 Walgreens locations, six CVS stores and five locally owned pharmacies.

The nuclear power plants in Illinois are Braidwood, Byron, Clinton, Dresden, LaSalle and Quad-Cities.

The state also maintains a supply of KI pills for emergency workers in or near a contaminated area during a nuclear power plant accident.



**Don't Forget to RSVP for the Wednesday Evening Event at the 2017 IEMA Training Summit. <https://iemasummit2017.pathable.com>**

# Enjoy the Solar Eclipse with These Safety Tips



On Monday, Aug.21, a solar eclipse will be visible (weather permitting) across all of North America and will last approximately two to three hours. Halfway through the event, a brief total eclipse will be visible within a roughly 70-mile-wide path from Oregon to South Carolina. This path will cross Southern Illinois, turning day into night and making visible the solar corona – one of nature's most awesome sights.

The only safe way to look directly at the uneclipsed or partially eclipsed sun is through special-purpose solar filters, such as eclipse glasses or hand-held solar viewers. Other materials, including sunglasses, are not safe for looking at the sun. Make sure purchased filters are marked as meeting the ISO 12312-2 (sometimes written as ISO 12312-2:2015) international standard. Filters that are ISO 12312-2 certified not only reduce visible sunlight to safe and comfortable levels but also block ultraviolet and infrared radiation.

Looking directly at the sun is unsafe except during the brief totality phase of a solar eclipse, when the moon entirely blocks the sun's face. Totality will only occur in the previously mentioned path and will only last one to two minutes, so as soon as the sun begins to reappear, replace your solar viewer.

Always inspect your solar filter before use; if scratched or damaged, discard it. Read and follow any

instructions printed on or packaged with the filter, and always supervise children using solar filters. Never look at the uneclipsed or partially eclipsed sun through an unfiltered camera, telescope, binoculars or other optical device, even while using your eclipse glasses or hand-held solar viewer — the concentrated solar rays will damage the filter and could cause serious eye injury.

Seek expert advice from an astronomer before using a solar filter with a camera, a telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device. An alternative method for safe viewing of the partially eclipsed sun is pinhole projection.

If you plan to drive to the path of the total eclipse, be aware that approximately 200 million people live within a day's drive of this path. In addition to individual travelers, the eclipse is likely to draw numerous groups including schools, enthusiast communities and other entities to the area. Make sure to take extra caution and be prepared for potential travel emergencies.

By following these simple rules, you can safely enjoy this solar eclipse and be rewarded with memories to last a lifetime.

*(Information for this article was obtained from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, American Astronomical Society, and U.S. Department of Transportation websites.)*

**Previous issues of Inside IEMA are available at:**  
**<http://www.illinois.gov/iema/Info/Pages/Newsletters.aspx>.**



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